

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. Support for the amendment to claim 1 can be found at least in Fig. 2. Thus, no new matter is added.

I. 35 U.S.C. §103 Rejection

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over alleged Applicant-admitted prior art (Fig. 7, hereinafter "AAPA") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,747,447 to Wisener. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The applied references, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or render obvious "a plurality of guide bars that stop rotation of one or more of the plurality of piercing needles, one of the plurality of guide bars being positioned between two adjacent piercing needles, and disposed between the tip of one of the two adjacent piercing needles and the second axis," as recited in independent claim 1.

In particular, the alleged AAPA fails to disclose this feature because guide bars are unnecessary in an apparatus that does not allow for the independent rotation of the piercing needles. Further, Fig. 9 of Wisener shows a number of pins 90 and 91 that could be alleged to correspond to the above-quoted guide bars. However, Fig. 9 of Wisener shows that the pins 90 and 91 are not disposed between the tip of the needle and the axis of rotation, but rather before both the axis and the needles. Therefore, each of the applied references fail to disclose the above-quoted feature of independent claim 1. As a result, the applied references fail to disclose or render obvious this feature.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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